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WARBLERS AND THE GREATER CEDAR RAPIDS

By EARNEST W. STEFFEN
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CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA
(With drawings by the author)

To have suitable territory to attract warblers one must have an area containing shrubs of various kinds, evergreens, plum thickets, hawthorns, wild crabs, and an assortment of trees that will harbor insects on which the warblers may feed. This territory need not be large nor need the acceptable places be in a single large plot. It may consist of small areas interspersed in residential sections and still be good warbler territory. Nor need the areas contain all the trees and shrubs mentioned above. Warblers are not that particular.

MYRTLE WARBLER

There was a time when Cedar Rapids enjoyed such a combination. When that combination prevailed one could go out some May day when the warbler migration was on and gather a very creditable list of warbler observations without even going beyond the city limits. In our part of the city we had such disconnected areas which provided the proper environment for migrating warblers. On the east was Mound Farm Woods, an excellent place for bird observation. In line with it and Daniel's Park is our home. Westward, but separated by residences, is an area owned by Coe College through which runs McLeod Creek, a wooded area that connects with Shaver Park. Away to the left of that are Cedar Lake, the Cedar River, and Ellis Park, all of which area was formerly very attractive to birds.

In order to make our own place similarly attractive, we made the proper plantings and then built a pool for an additional attraction. Here, in our own yard during the years of good observaion, we have recorded 18 species of warbler visitors. From the common Myrtle Warbler to

OVEN-BIRD

the rare Parula Warbler, from the somber Tennessee to the brilliant Blackburnian, from the ground-loving Oven-bird to the treetop-searching Blackpoll, from the dignified Mourning Warbler to the sprightly Redstart, they came to us in great numbers. This list of 18 species we gathered largely without even going outside the house. And in the areas mentioned within the city and near our home we have seen a total of 22 different species of warblers. During those years every spring was a time to which we looked forward with keen anticipation.

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER

There came a time, however, when building material became available in quantity again and the city began to grow. The Mound Farm Woods was the first area to be exploited. It was divided into lots and sold for building purposes. That good bird territory has been denuded of its shrubbery, its plum thickets, and its wild crab trees; and to a large extent its large trees as well. People will pay a premium for a wooded lot and then hire men to cut down the trees and clear out the shrubbery. It doesn't make sense but that's the way they do it. The loss of this good warbler territory alone has definitely affected the number of birds that visit our home. As of now we scarcely see a single warbler here any more.

In addition to the enormous building program, which has robbed the city of many good areas for birds, the park authorities during the last few years have gone on a grand spree of ridding the city parks of shrubbery. Ellis Park, which formerly contained a wonderful growth of shrubbery, now looks comparatively bare and provides very little sanctuary for birds of

CANADA WARBLER

any kind. In all the parks trees are removed as they die or are broken by storms and almost no planting is done to replace them. In addition the junior element of the city destroys considerable amounts of shrubbery, which too is never replaced, nor is the destruction ever curbed. Slowly but surely the beauty and charm of our parks and the city in general are being taken away from us under the guise of a progressive and forward-looking policy.

No longer do we see the large number of species of birds around our home. Only the most common birds are around any more. No longer do we see the great numbers of desirable birds in the city at large. Only the Starlings, the English Sparrows, and the Domestic Pigeons have increased in number and in evidence. Most certainly Cedar Rapids has lost not only many of its birds but much of its beauty and attractiveness as well. It would appear that the new policy is lacking in vision and in good comprehensive planning with a healthy consideration for wise conservation.

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER

It has ever been a common practice for conservation organizations to go to bat with state and especially national law-making bodies in order to save some of our wildlife heritages from greedy and selfish interests and those politicians who think only in terms of political expediency. That kind of activity has rarely been necessary in connection with local bodies. But now that situation has changed, too. Here in Cedar Rapids it has been necessary for the Bird Club and the Natural Science Club to protest certain actions being practiced by the city's park authorities. In surveying the new acquisitions of land secured by the city for park purposes, members of the clubs found that in them likewise the policy of "cut and slash" was in full sway. The clubs protested those practices and urged that some, at least, of the wildlife environment be saved. Whether they will get any consideration on their request remains to be seen.

I suppose that Cedar Rapids is no different from other growing cities. That in itself is regrettable. It is regrettable too that conservation minded people must always be in the minority. And it is further regrettable that this minority must ever fight and struggle for the things that all reasonable-minded people admit is highly desirable. What we need in greater Cedar Rapids is not more cutting down of trees, not more clearing out of shrubbery, not more cut-and-dried primness, but more planting, more wildlife cover, more sanctuary for birds, and much more good warbler territory, not alone in our present parks but in additional areas throughout the city.

SOME UNUSUAL WINTER BIRD RESIDENTS IN NORTHEAST IOWA

By EMMETT POLDER
Loras College
DUBUQUE, IOWA

The fine work done by the committee who compiled the check-list of Iowa bird distribution has brought to my mind some past observations that appear to be worthy of publication. Previous to the publication of this list I had regarded these observations as having no particular significance.

A record of a Wilson's Snipe spending the entire winter of 1954-'55 on Hewitt Creek at Dyersville is one significant example. It was first seen on December 19, 1954, and was subsequently flushed each time the writer visited the area in January and February, 1955. The last observation was recorded on February 13, 1955. This snipe appeared to be in good physical condition and spent most of its time feeding along the shore-line and in the shallow riffles of Hewitt Creek in a 30-rod territory just above its confluence with the North Fork of the Maquoketa River. Examination of the riffles indicated that the most abundant food organisms present were amphipods. No evidence of a roosting site could be found above the water line; thus it would appear that the snipe must have roosted in shallow water under overhanging vegetation and shelves of ice along the shore line during periods of severe cold weather.

I have often flushed individual snipes from spring-fed rills along the margins of the North Fork and Plum Creeks during December and January in past years; but the Dyersville specimen observed this past year is the only one that I have encounted regularly through an entire winter at one location.

A January record of a Sharp-shinned Hawk taken in Black Hawk County is also of interest although the record is at a time prior to the 15-year period covered by the distributional check-list. The writer and John Plantz of Finchford caught a small hawk in a weasel trap near Goose Lake 2 miles south of Finchford early in January, 1933. It was caught by one talon and suffered no other visible injury. It was taken, alive, to the late Winifred Gilbert at Iowa State Teachers College for identification. She identified it as a Sharp-shin and later released it in the College Gardens at Cedar Falls. This hawk was caught in a narrow runway under a fence-row overgrown with high Spartina slough grass in a location nearly one mile from the nearest stand of timber. It was apparently attracted to the trap by a House Sparrow suspended from a fence wire as bait.

The Belted Kingfisher is listed as a winter visitor for northeast and north-central Iowa. This bird is seen frequently in the Dubuque, Delaware, Clayton County area throughout the entire winter. During the winter of 1954-'55 two Kingfishers were observed each weekend in a one-mile stretch of the North Fork of the Maquoketa, at the north edge of Dyersville, from January 1 until February 20. Other January and February observations were recorded at Earlville, Elk Creek near Colesburg, and at Millville in Clayton County. The many spring-fed streams and high banks in this area provide excellent feeding grounds and shelter for this species. Whether the specimens observed were winter residents or winter visitors is, in the writer's opinion, debatable until some technique for identifying them is employed.

The Red-breasted Nuthatch appeared in considerable numbers in the Dubuque County area during the winter of 1954-'55. One of these nuthatches was first seen at Dyersville December 14 and remained until April 18. On April 8 two other Red-breasted Nuthatches were seen on the Loras College

campus. These appear to be unusual spring records since this species is generally supposed to return to its northern breeding grounds in March. I don't know how our distribution list committee would classify these late visitors—perhaps the term "spring laggards" would fit them.

WINTER FOOD SAMPLE OF THE LONG-EARED OWL

By PETER C. PETERSEN, JR.
620 East 30th St.
DAVENPORT, IOWA

On December 6, 1953, the writer located a roost of Long-eared Owls (*Asio otus wilsonianus*) at Pine Hill Cemetery, Davenport, Iowa. The roost was in a white pine, which is one of a group of ten scattered in a small area in the northwest part of the cemetery. The roost was visited 17 times, with one bird seen until December 29, 1953, when three were found. From January 16 to February 19, 1954, two birds were present. The birds were seen for the last time on March 6, 1954. This fluctuation might be due to a roost of four or five Long-eared Owls located at a nursery about one-half mile from the cemetery.

The major food items of these owls as determined by analysis of about 300 pellets are listed in Table I.

Table I. Skulls in 300 Long-eared Owl Pellets

	No. of skulls	Per cent
White-footed Mice (Permoyscus)	213	54.5
Meadow Mice (Microtus)	85	22
Harvest Mice (Reithrodontomys megalotis)	26	6.5
House Mice (Mus musculus)	23	6
Short-tailed Shrew (Blarina brevicauda)	18	4.5
Birds (Aves)	16	4
Long-tailed Shrew (Sorex personatus)	7	2
Common Mole (Scalopus aquaticus)	2	.5
	390	100%

The birds were merely identified as birds at first, but it became evident from the size of the bills that several species were present. I had discarded nine of the bills before any size difference was detected. The remaining seven bills were sent to Dr. Harrison Tordoff of the University of Kansas for analysis. Dr. Tordoff identified the bills as follows: Song Sparrow, 3 bills; House Sparrow, 2 bills; Vesper Sparrow, 1 bill; Field Sparrow, 1 bill.

It is interesting to note that seven Song Sparrows and three Field Sparrows were seen on our 1953 Christmas Census. The Field Sparrows were seen at an area just one-half mile from the roost area by Lang Baily. Lang and I observed a Vesper Sparrow at Duck Creek Park, about 2 miles along the creek from the roost area. It is also noteworthy that the two commonest native fringillids, Slate-colored Junco and Tree Sparrow, were not present in the sample analyzed. The pellets also included four knotweed seeds and one corn skin, probably from the stomachs of the mice.

The following is a comparison of my percentages of about 200 pellets containing 243 skulls found in Pine Hill Cemetery during the winter of 1952-53; the data in Table I; Thomas Morrissey's data from the Duck Creek Park study of 1949 (Iowa Bird Life, XIX; 70-71); and Morrissey's percentages from a study conducted at an area 7 miles E. N.E. of Pine Hill Cemetery in 1950 (Iowa Bird Life XXI: 28-29).

Table II. A Comparison of Skulls in Long-eared Owl Pellets.

	Petersen 1953	Petersen 1954	Morrissey 1949	Morrissey 1950
White-footed Mouse	34.5%	54.5%	51%	32%
Meadow Mouse	44.5%	22 %	41%	56%
Harvest Mouse	6.5%	6.5%	+2%	8%
House Mouse	1 %	6 %	-2%	-2%
Short-tailed Shrew	6 %	4.5%	+2%	-3%
Aves	3 %	4 %		-1%
Long-tailed Shrew	4 %	2 %		
Common Mole		.5%		
Little Shrew			-1%	
Crayfish	.5%			

The writer is indebted to the late Lowell S. Miller, formerly of the Davenport Public Museum, for his invaluable identification of many of the mammals; to Professor Thomas Morrissey of St. Ambrose College for his assistance in identifying the trees and valuable advice; to Dr. Harrison Tordoff of the University of Kansas for identification of the bird bills; and to Dr. George O. Hendrickson of Iowa State College for his advice and copy-reading.

A GLIMPSE OF MASS MIGRATION OF WATERFOWL AT SPIRIT LAKE, IOWA

By JAMES G. SIEH
State Conservation Commission
OKOBOJI, IOWA

Out of the tundra wastes, from the fertile parklands, the coteaux, and the endless expanse of prairie, came a myriad of waterfowl into Iowa on November 2, 1955. What quirk of nature moved these vast throngs of migrant voyageurs en masse we do not understand, even though we correlate their movements with continental weather. How universal, yet simultaneous their mass movements, and how inspiring their aerial ranks were when witnessed throughout the length and breadth of Iowa on this date.

Mass migration—this term is descriptive and accurate, yet inadequate fully to illustrate the phenomenon. We do not know or understand what signal motivates, triggers, or begins these dynamic fall movements. We do not know just how the wildfowl gather their numbers together into ranks and suddenly pour forth from the north. Since 1949 three mass movements of waterfowl have been witnessed in the lakes region of northwest Iowa; in 1950, 1953 and in 1955. In each instance the duration of mass flight was approximately 24 hours, and it was assumed the flights continued throughout part of, if not all, the hours of darkness.

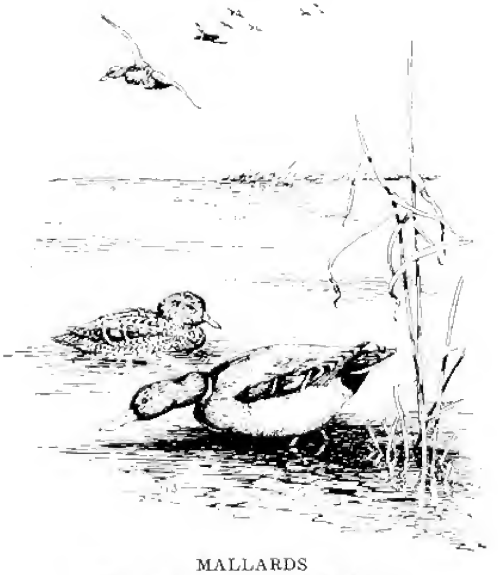
A forecast of approaching bad weather on November 1, 1955, caused the writer to anticipate and watch for migrating waterfowl while enroute to Spirit Lake from Aberdeen, South Dakota (300 miles northwestward). No wildfowl were observed until about 2:00 p.m., when several flocks of traveling Mallards were seen moving southward above the prairie hills near Clear Lake, South Dakota, and the Minnesota border. No other migrants were observed until approximately 3:30 p. m., when suddenly in the Lakefield, Minnesota, vicinity flocks of Mallards moving southward could be seen at intervals in almost any direction. This was the first hint that a mass migration had begun, for the vanguard of migrants were sighted from this point to Spirit Lake at intervals, and from then until dark.

Migration was well under way by daylight the following morning. Flock after flock of Mallards were leaving the rough waters of Big Spirit Lake and again heading southward. Sensing danger as they approached the shoreline and isthmus between Big Spirit and East Okoboji lakes, flocks with powerful pinions beating into a strong northwest wind flared upward in wide corkscrew patterns, quickly carrying themselves up and out of shotgun range. In a few seconds they disappeared across the isthmus and beyond. All morning this exodus from Big Spirit continued and many, many thousands of Mallards in flocks and groups of flocks repeated the performance. Only a few diving ducks crossed the isthmus at this time of day, and they too were beyond shotgun range. These divers forecast an evening flight yet to come.

The afternoon flight of Mallards leaving Big Spirit Lake dwindled to nothingness compared with the migrant horde leaving earlier in the day. All day long flocks of Mallards moving overland in non-stop procession passed high overhead, southward bound. Many of these migrants did not stop in the lakes region at all but continued their uninterrupted flight.

Late in the afternoon as the sun dipped low in a cold and windy sky, the diving ducks began their exodus from Big Spirit Lake where they had been resting throughout the daylight hours. The tempo or frequency of movement of the divers began to increase about 4:30 p. m. As the minutes passed by the momentum of flocks of Scaup and Ring-necked ducks rose like a crescendo until the flight intensity reached a fever pitch. Hundreds of flocks of divers crossed the isthmus simultaneously in puffs, pushes, waves, or pulses across a front 1000 yards wide from east to west. This natural panorama unfolded like a living symphony. The flight crescendo reached a peak then slowly decreased as twilight vanished from the cold and ruddy sky. The tangible beauty and grandeur of this diver flight lasted for approximately an hour and a half from beginning to end, but the intangible reflections are permanent.

As the bowed and surging lines of speeding divers, rank upon rank and more than 10,000 strong, advanced and vanished across the isthmus, often



MALLARDS
From a drawing by E. W. Steffen

almost scraping the topmost twigs of huge cottonwoods below, something was missing. How in keeping with the rough mood and melody of autumn's benevolence to have some fastidious hunter or small boy harvest a few of these beautiful creatures. What inspiration, truth, and satisfaction young and old receive to hold in hand a well-earned bird, to touch and examine the beautiful plumage, to view the vivid colors of feet and bill before they fade, and to admire the brilliant yellow eye-ring of a Scaup or Ring-necked Duck.

RANDOM ITEMS FROM THE OBSERVER'S NOTEBOOK

By WILLIAM YOUNGWORTH
3119 East Second St.
SIOUX CITY, IOWA

Most of the homes in our neighborhood are old-fashioned places with stout brick chimneys thrusting up through gabled roofs. Progress has caught up with them and they are nearly all heated with natural gas. On a bitter winter morning what more could a cold bird ask for than a warm perch and warm air bathing its face? This is where the Starlings show they are rather intelligent. One morning when it was 17 degrees below zero I surveyed the brick chimneys in the area and found nearly every one harboring several Starlings. One had enough birds seated around the top to form a complete hollow square. On these very cold days nearly all the Starlings sat with their beaks pointing into the heat. I also noticed that they often brought pieces of suet to the chimney tops, where they ate in warm comfort.

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks often extract the seeds of the catalpa beans in warm season, but it was not until February 22, 1955, with the temperature at near zero, that I saw a Cardinal do the same thing. This male Cardinal spent several hours off and on through the day, working its beak up into the seed pods and extracting the flat, nutritious food.

While on the subject of bird food it should be mentioned that the alert bird-watcher will often be surprised at the things birds eat or when they eat them. Last April, when food certainly should have been easy to get, I watched a male Robin for several days as he fed on fruit of the fernleaf sumac. On examination one finds these seeds are covered with a coarse, hairy coat. The seed inside the covering is so hard that cutting it takes a sharp knife. Here was a Robin stuffing himself several times a day on this rather unpalatable looking food.

We know that Goldfinches live primarily on weed seeds, flower seeds and the like, but when you see them in your French or Persian lilacs during winter, watch them and see if they may not be prying into the seed pods. I have discovered that these dainty little birds will often spend considerable time feeding on lilac seeds.

Two or three decades ago some ornithologists predicted that in the cities English Sparrows would disappear with the horse. City dwellers in the midwest who do any winter bird feeding know the English Sparrow has survived and will always be with us. This sparrow certainly has adapted itself to flexible living and apparently eats what is at hand at the moment. During late May, when the ground is covered with the seed of the American elm, the female sparrow can be seen with a little cluster of youngsters about her. What is she doing? She is in the process of shucking the elm seed from the wing-like sheath and stuffing the cleaned seed down each open mouth in turn.

Spring in western Iowa came early in 1955, with the rhubarb pushing up in mid-February and cherries on the old Montmorency cherry tree all

ripe and nearly bird-gone by the end of May. The old tree had one more surprise for us on May 29, for the last flight of Gray-cheeked Thrushes was going through and one of the birds liked ripe cherries. This thrush was noticed early in the morning, feeding up in the tree like the Robins. The Robins were greedy as usual and would chase the intruder out of the tree, but in a few minutes the thrush would be back enjoying the cherries. At first I was a bit skeptical, as I had never seen this species of thrush eating cherries, but as the day wore on and this hungry bird kept coming back, I decided that it was as much of a cherry lover as the Robin, and this species could also be harmful to a cherry crop if cherries were ripe when it migrated through our area.

Some years ago I reported a nesting colony of Cliff Swallows using abandoned Bank Swallow burrows for their nests. In 1955 I again had the short-lived pleasure of finding such a colony. I examined this one daily—perhaps I should say to the bitter end. On May 31, 1955, I found Cliff Swallows building their regular bottle-shaped mud nests in crevices of a high clay bank in Sioux City. I had misgivings at once because it is an area where, as soon as school is out for the season, boys dig caves, cut handholds in the steep bank and in general play wild games. School was not yet out, however, and about 15 pairs of swallows had completed their nests on the high part of the cliff. The cliff tapered back to a spot 20 feet high where a colony of about 50 pairs of Bank Swallows were nesting. Close watching revealed that several pairs of Cliff Swallows were also nesting in the burrows, scattered among the Bank Swallow nests. The difference was that each Cliff Swallow pair had built just a little short neck of mud pellets over the opening in the bank. This was the extent of the building labor to which these few pairs went. They preferred to live in a cave with just a bit of mud front porch. On June 8 I made my daily call. School was now out and I found that every whole nest on the high cliff had been knocked down, all the mud porches on the low cliff were gone, and most of the burrows had been dug out. The swallows were gone and I never saw them there again. The school boys (it seems all school boys must go through that destructive phase of life) had done their ill deed that day and oh! how thoroughly.

THE DECORAH CONVENTION

By MRS. GEORGE CROSSLEY
Retiring Secretary-Treasurer
Iowa Ornithologists' Union

The 34th annual meeting of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union was held at Decorah, Saturday and Sunday, May 19 and 20, 1956. Departing from traditional convention procedure for Saturday morning, the members were taken on field trips, leaving the Winneshiek Hotel parking lot at six o'clock. Weather was perfect and the birds most cooperative. Those who visited Siewers Springs both Saturday and Sunday will not soon forget the thrill of a field day in warblers. Other places viisted both days were the Balsam Fir Forest, Chimney Rocks, Dorchester, Twin Springs, Dunning Springs and Cardinal Marsh. The grandeur of the scenery in the Decorah region, located in the so-called "Little Switzerland of Iowa," competed with birding on the trips. Another unusual feature observed on the field trips was the presence of a new species, armed with cameras, who watched the bird-watchers and delighted in candid shots.

Members met at Main Building on Luther College campus for registration and the afternoon meeting which opened at 1:30. After the opening remarks by President Stiles and Dr. Hoslett of the biology department of the

college, a telegram was read from Dr. Keck, Naperville, Illinois, explaining his absence due to illness. Dr. J. P. Linduska, Chief, Division of Game Management, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D. C., was then introduced as our first speaker, who chose for his subject "Migratory Waterfowl." He gave a detailed account of the problems confronting the Fish and Wildlife Service arising from a rapidly expanding human population and the increased use of marginal lands by an expanding agriculture. The result is the decrease of natural habitat areas for waterfowl. He explained the methods used by the various branches of the service (research, river basin studies, federal aid, refuges and game management) in analyzing and searching for a solution to the growing problem.

The second and last speaker on the afternoon program was Dr. Harold S. Peters, Research Biologist, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Atlanta, Georgia. He talked on "Mourning Dove Management in in North America." Although classed as a migratory game bird by international treaty, few extensive studies of the Mourning Dove have been made to determine its status on a nationwide basis. Dr. Peters requested volunteer help from any interested members who would be willing to work on a nestling banding project (3,000 birds for Iowa) over a five-year period. The Fish and Wildlife Service is conducting this project and roadside census studies in all states to provide information for adequate management in the future.

An intermission for visiting was provided at 3 p. m.—a coffee break in the Faculty Lounge, courtesy of our friendly Norwegian hosts. Mr. Stiles presided at the business meeting which followed. Upon motion and approval of the members, the reading of the Secretary's minutes was dispensed with. The Treasurer's report was read and approved. The report showed a balance of $945.44. A report from Editor Pierce informed the membership of the

ORNITHOLOGISTS' BANQUET, LOYALTY HALL
AT LUTHER COLLEGE, MAY 19

Standing is Bruce F. Stiles. Seated, beside him is John H. Baker, banquet speaker. (Fred W. Kent photograph)

dwindling supply of available material for publication in Iowa Bird Life. He asked for contributions of noteworthy articles for future use. The following committees were appointed by Mr. Stiles: Resolutions, Dr. M. L. Grant, Dr. G. O. Hendrickson, Mrs. B. Henning; Nominating, A. J. Palas, M. L. Jones, Dr. E. L. Kozicky; Auditing, Miss Lillian Serbousek, Dr. P. P. Laude, Mrs. H. R. Peasley. Pete Petersen, Jr., after suggesting identifying arm bands for our Union, was named chairman of a committee, including W. W. Barrett and Dr. Robert Vane, to give the idea further consideration. Meeting adjourned.

At 6 p. m. the annual banquet was served in the dining room of Loyalty Hall, Luther College. After the dinner Mr. Stiles introduced those seated at the speaker's table. Dr. J. W. Ylvisaker, president of the college, welcomed the members and guests to the campus. He gave a brief history of Luther College, the oldest in the state. An interesting fact noted was that birds' nests and eggs were among the first objects to be placed in the museum established in those early days. Dr. Ylvisaker closed with remarks on the spiritual values to be received from membership in an organization such as our Union.

The guest speaker for the evening was John H. Baker, president of the National Audubon Society. He outlined the conservation policy of the Society which is education of the public on the intangible values of their projects. These demonstrate an intelligent treatment and wise use of our natural resources. This program of education is carried on by the four Audubon summer camps for teachers. Audubon Junior Clubs and Wildlife Tours.

After a five o'clock breakfast served at the hotel, the various groups started out for the annual official bird count. Scattered showers during the morning reduced, somewhat, the activities of birds and birders. All groups returned to the hotel for one o'clock luncheon and the final business meeting. The compilation, conducted by Dr. Hendrickson, totaled 145 species for Sunday. The combined count, including birds seen on Saturday, totaled 166. Miss Lillian Serbousek, chairman of the Auditing Committee, reported the treasurer's books were found to be adequate, correct and in good condition. Dr. M. L. Grant, chairman, read the report of the Resolutions Committee. Both reports were approved. A. J. Palas, chairman of the Nominating Committee, read the names of the new officers (as given on the title page of this issue). They were elected by unanimous ballot cast by the secretary upon motion of the voting members. Invitations were received from Davenport and Vinton for the 1957 spring meeting. A memorable convention was then adjourned.

Resolutions.—The Iowa Ornithologists' Union wishes to commend particularly the many people who have been responsible for the organization and implementation of this convention; namely, (1) the program committee of seven, Mrs. H. R. Peasley, chairman, (2) Dr. S. A. Hoslett and Mrs. Burt Henning, who handled most of the local arrangements and supervised the procurement of the lovely table centerpieces of Viola Missouriensis, Mitella diphylla, and Cystopteris fragilas, (3) Arthur J. Palas, who made several trips from Postville in connection with the meeting, (4) Dr. J. W. Ylvisaker, Pres. of Luther College, for personally extending the facilities of the institution to us, (5) the many other representatives of the college who furnished assistance in connection with the Saturday meeting, the courtesy coffee and the evening banquet, (6) the Winneshiek Hotel for excellent accommodations and meals, (7) John H. Baker, of the National Audubon Society, for coming to address us, (8) Drs. J. P. Linduska and H. S. Peters of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service for their appearance on the program, (9) the local representatives of the State Conservation Commission, Herbert Eells, Wes

Ashby, Ben Davis, and George Kaufman for helping handle the field trips, and (10) Albert C. Berkowitz for printing the programs.

The IOU is deeply grateful to the Executive Council and the several officers who have handled the affairs of the Union the past year, particularly the President, Mr. Stiles, and we cannot fail to commend his brilliant performance as toastmaster; the Vice-President, Mr. Brown; the Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Crossley, who, among other things, gets to do the clerical work; the Librarian, Dr. Ennis; and the Editor, Mr. Pierce, to whom the Union is undoubtedly in greater debt than to any other one person for his devoted and intelligent support over the many years.

George O. Hendrickson
Martin L. Grant, Chairman

Attendance Register.—AMES, Dr. and Mrs. George Hendrickson, Dr. E. L. Kozicky; CEDAR FALLS, Dr. and Mrs. M. L. Grant, Mrs. Eleanor O'Connell, Mrs. Russell Rugg; CEDAR RAPIDS, Dorothy Brunner, Lavina Dragoo, Eleanore Fullerton, Dr. Karl E. Goellner, Lillian Serbousek, Dr. and Mrs. Robt. Vane, Pauline Wershofen, Myra Willis; DAVENPORT, A. Lang Baily, Pete Petersen, Jr.; DECORAH, Mrs. Alden Bauder, Frederic Green, Mrs. Burt Henning, Ragina M. Haines, Dr. S. A. Hoslett, Lora Lynch, Dr. and Mrs. J. W. Ylvisaker; DES MOINES, Mr. and Mrs. Woodward Brown, Dr. and Mrs. Harold Peasley, Bruce F. Stiles; DUBUQUE, Mrs. W. R. Gruwell, Mrs. M. Pregler, Mrs. Robt. Ruegnitz, Ival Schuster; ESTHERVILLE, Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Jones; FARLEY, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Crossley; FAYETTE, Wes Ashby; GRINNELL, Bertha Miller; INDEPENDENCE, Ruth Funk; IOWA CITY, Fred Kent, Dr. and Mrs. P. P. Laude; LANSING, Geo. Kaufman; LIME SPRINGS, Herbert Eells; MT. VERNON, Mrs. Marie Berry, David Ennis, Dr. Harold Ennis, Mrs. Bessie Scobey; NEWTON, Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Moore; NORTHWOOD, Mrs. John Bottleman; OSAGE, Ben Davis; PERRY, Cecelia Doran; POSTVILLE, Harne J. Kramer, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Palas; PRAIRIE CITY, Dale Berkenholz; RYAN, Paul Pierce; SIGOURNEY, Mr. and Mrs. Forrest Millikin; SIOUX CITY, Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Barrett, Eunice Barrett, Mrs. Evelyn Hanna, Robt. Nicholson, Gertrude Weaver; TRIPOLI, Jack McSweeny; VINTON, Paul D. Kline; WATERLOO, Dr. Myrle Burk, Geo. Faulkner, Earl Freeman, Helen Hawkins, Russell Hays, Rodger Moon, Pearl Rader, Dr. C. W. Robertson; WEBSTER CITY, Dennis Carter; WHEATLAND, Esther Copp; WINTHROP, F. J. Pierce; ATLANTA, Ga., Dr. Harold S. Peters; LA CROSSE, WIS., Janice Johnson; NORMAL, ILL., Bertha Royce; WASHINGTON, D. C., Dr. Jos. P. Linduska. Total registered, 86.

Birds Seen on the Field Trip, May 20, 1956.—Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue and Green Herons, Am. Egret, Am. Bittern, Mallard, Gadwall, Baldpate, Pintail, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal, Shoveller, Redhead, Lesser Scaup and Ruddy Ducks, Red-tailed, Broad-winged, Marsh and Sparrow Hawks, Osprey, Ring-necked Pheasant, King and Virginia Rails, Sora, Am. Coot, Semipalmated, Am. Golden and Black-bellied Plovers, Killdeer, Wilson's Snipe, Spotted, Pectoral, Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers, Lesser Yellow-legs, Sanderling, Wilson's Phalarope, Common and Black Terns, Rock Dove, Mourning Dove, Black-billed Cuckoo, Great Horned Owl, Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Ruby-thr. Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Flicker, Pileated, Red-bellied, Redheaded, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Eastern Kingbird, Crested, Yellow-bellied, Acadian, Alder, Least and Olive-sided Flycatchers, Phoebe, Wood Pewee, Prairie Horned Lark, Bank, Rough-winged, Barn and Cliff Swallows, Purple Martin, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, House and Prairie Marsh

Wrens, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Olive-backed, Gray-cheeked and Willow Thrushes, Bluebird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Am. Pipit, Migrant Shrike, Starling, Yellow-throated, Blue-headed, Red-eyed, Philadelphia and Warbling Vireos, Black and White, Prothonotary, Blue-winged, Tennessee, Orange-crowned, Nashville, Parula, Yellow, Magnolia, Myrtle, Black-thr. Green, Cerulean, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, Bay-breasted, Black-poll, Palm, Kentucky, Mourning, Wilson's and Canada Warblers, Oven-bird, Grinnell's and Lousiana Water-thrushes, Northern Yellow-throat, Am. Redstart, Bobolink, Eastern and Western Meadowlarks, Yellow-headed and Red-winged Blackbirds, Baltimore Oriole, Bronzed Grackle, Cowbird, Scarlet Tanager, Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Goldfinch, Red-eyed Towhee, English, Savannah, Grasshopper, Nelson's, Vesper, Lark, Chipping, Field, White-crowned, White-throated, Lincoln's, Swamp and Song Sparrows. Total, 145.

Additional Birds Seen Saturday, May 19, 1956.—Black-crowned Night Heron, Turkey Vulture, Ruffed Grouse, Ruddy Turnstone, Upland Plover, Red-backed and Stilt Sandpipers, Dowitcher, Hudsonian Godwit, Barred Owl, Tree Swallow, Bewick's Wren, Short-billed Marsh Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Cedar Waxwing, Bell's Vireo, Golden-winged and Cape May Warblers, Pine Siskin, Slate-colored Junco, and Harris's Sparrow. Total, 21. Grand total, 166.

GENERAL NOTES

Black-bellied Plover near Marble Rock.—On May 3, 1955, I saw a Black-bellied Plover in a watery area in our pasture. Although the bird was not in full breeding plumage, I had watched the species on the Texas coast in February and felt sure of my identification.—PEARL KNOOP, Marble Rock, Iowa.

A Junco with White Head.—The first fall migrating Juncos appeared in our yard on October 10, 1955, and were seen almost daily from then on. On October 20 a little stranger arrived. That morning I disturbed a completely white-headed bird, which dived into the hedge and was lost for some time. A bit later the bird came out of skulking, and after a close look I decided it was a fully-plumaged, male Slate-colored Junco. The entire head and neck were completely white, but the dark eye proved the bird was not a true albino. The plumage below the neck was a typical junco and the white of the tail feathers was normal, as was the pink of the bill. Our little oddity stayed around the yard for four days, then it was gone. The other Juncos didn't bother it and only the noisy English Sparrows chased it, as they do most of our native sparrows.—WM. YOUNGWORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

Summer and Fall Notes, 1955, in Mississippi River Counties.—

HOLBOELL'S GREBE. One seen at Lock No. 14 near Bettendorf on November 12. It was in winter plumage, and was identified by long neck, large bill, large size, gray coloration except for white mark on side of head, and top of head darker. It was seen in good light at about 100 yards through 20-power 'scope. Young cormorants and ducks were near by for comparison.

AMERICAN MERGANSER. One male, in full breeding plumage, was seen June 12, June 26, and July 10 at Lock No. 14. We looked for a female but could not find one. It was probaly a non-breeding male. It was studied carefully at 150 and 200 yards with 20-power 'scope.

WESTERN SANDPIPER. Four seen on July 31 at Credit Island harbor mudflat. Identified by longer, thicker-based bill, size compared with Least, Semipalmated and Pectoral Sandpipers; black legs, back somewhat more heavily marked than Semipalmated. Seen at 20 yards in good light, studied for 20 minutes with 20-power 'scope. (Dennis Sheets with me).

LEAST TERN. Three were seen on June 19 at Lake Odessa. Identified by very small size, yellow bill, black cap with white patch on forehead, gray mantle, slightly forked tail. Seen at 15 yards and studied with 8-power binoculars in flight. Dennis Sheets was with me and we worked from a canoe. We looked for a nest but to no avail.

CASPIAN TERN. One seen July 24, just south of the town of Bellevue. It was flying downstream over the Mississippi. It was identified by very large size, black cap, forked tail and very large, red bill; seen at about 200 yards through 20-power 'scope.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD. Four males and one female seen July 3 on Muskrat Slough, Jones County. I looked for a nest, and though the birds scolded persistently, none was found.

ORCHARD ORIOLE. Two young birds were seen in the company of adults on June 26 and July 5 in a cemetery 3½ miles southwest of McCausland (on a Wapsipinicon bluff). They were studied at 20-25 yards with 8-power binoculars. Thomas Morrissey was with me.—PETER C. PETERSEN, JR., 620 East 30th St., Davenport, Iowa.

Notes from the 1956 Spring Migration.—On April 1, while traveling on Highway 3 about 1½ miles east of Readlyn (Bremer County), I spotted some large white birds on a large pond not far from the paving. At first I took them to be domestic geese, but closer inspection revealed them as Whistling Swans. There were 10 of them and it was a genuine thrill for me. Several of them had a tawny color on the head and neck; Dr. Grant informed me that these were young birds. My presence did not disturb the swans at all. Most of the people raced by in cars unaware of the unusual sight near at hand; but one car did stop and a man and woman observed the swans with a telescope.

On Black Hawk Creek, Waterloo, on the morning of April 6, while watching Song Sparrows, Fox Sparrows, and Slate-colored Juncos, I heard the song of a Black-throated Green Warbler. After a short search I located this beautiful bird with yellow head and black throat. This is an unusually early date for this species. My earliest previous date is May 1, about 10 years ago.

While returning from a bird trip along the railroad near Black Hawk Creek on April 16, I saw a huge black woodpecker sail in and light on the trunk of a large tree. It was a Pileated Woodpecker and my first record. This was in an area that I cover nearly every day. No glass was necessary to identify the big bird. In a moment it took off and headed southeast for downtown Waterloo, and was soon out of sight.

Sunday, May 6, was a fine day for studying bird migration, and I saw the greatest variety of birds along Black Hawk Creek I have ever seen there in one day. I listed these: Short-billed Marsh Wren, 2; Catbird, 30; Brown Thrasher, 30; Olive-backed Thrush, 6; Black and White Warbler, 6; Blue-winged Warbler, 3; Golden-winged Warbler, 3; Oven-bird, 8; Northern Yellow-throat, 12; Redstart, 1; Baltimore Oriole, 6; Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 6; Purple Finch, 20; Towhee, 6; Clay-colored Sparrow, 5; Gambel's Sparrow, 2; White-crowned Sparrow, 5; Harris's Sparrow, 6; Lincoln's Sparrow, 8; Green Heron, 6; King Rail, 1; Solitary Sandpiper, 6; Red-headed Woodpecker, 6;

UPS AND DOWNS IN THE FEEDING OF THE DOWITCHER
Photographed at Amana Lake, May 8, 1955, by Fred W. Kent.

Crested Flycatcher, 1; Least Flycatcher, 20; White-throated Sparrow, 300 (very abundant and flying in large flocks; two other large flocks were seen in other areas). Later in the day I saw these birds at Goose Lake: Sora, 3; Greater Yellow-legs, 6; Least Sandpiper, 3; Wilson's Phalarope, 3; Bank Swallow, 2; Barn Swallow, 3; Prairie Marsh Wren, 10.—RUSSELL HAYS, 825 Franklin St., Waterloo, Iowa.

Wilson's Thrush in Cedar Rapids, and other Notes.—On June 7, 1956, a Wilson's Thrush had been singing for the third week in Shaver Park, Cedar Rapids. An hour's search failed to disclose a nest. The song of the Veery is unusual in this area although we always see this species in migration. Among trees and brush uprooted for relocating Highway 30 near Wheatland, we heard and saw a Carolina Wren on April 15, 1956—my first record of this species in our woods. On March 24, 1956, we flushed a Woodcock four times in the same locality. On June 15, 1955, we located a Yellow-breasted Chat in a willow thicket near Wheatland. Myra Willis had a glimpse of it the day before when visiting us. We left soon after to attend the Audubon Camp of Wisconsin, and I had no chance to find out whether it nested there.—C. ESTHER COPP, Wheatland, Iowa.

Records from the vicinity of Jewell, Hamilton County, during 1955.—The following records were obtained at Little Wall Lake south of Jewell and at Goose Lake east of Jewell. During the spring, the water level at both lakes was rather high and most shore-birds were seen at a small pond in a pasture north of Goose Lake; however, the water level at both lakes went down steadily during the summer and fall, creating extensive mudflats which attracted many shore-birds during the fall migration. Both lakes were partially open on March 12, and 11 species of ducks and Blue and Snow Geese were seen that day. Visits to the lakes were made from then until early in June, and again from the latter part of August to the latter part of October. The observers were Dale Birkenholz, Dennis L. Carter, Heber P. Johnson, and Peter C. Petersen, Jr.

Common Loon. Two were seen on Little Wall Lake, May 22 (D.B.,D.C., P.P.).

Horned Grebe. Three of these birds were at Little Wall on September 19, and one was seen there the following day (D.B., D.C.,P.P.).

Blue-winged Teal. A single bird was seen at Little Wall on March 18, which is a rather early record (D.C.,P.P.).

Peregrine Falcon. One was seen in flight at the southwest side of Little Wall, September 16. It was identified by its size, shape, and mustaches (D.C., H.J.).

Golden Plover. This species was at Little Wall Lake from September 16 to October 15, with a peak of 47 individuals on October 1 (all observers).

Black-bellied Plover. At least two individuals were present from September 16 to October 16 and were seen at both lakes (all observers).

Ruddy Turnstone. Ten were seen at close range when they alighted at the pond north of Goose Lake, May 27 (D.C.).

Willet. Three were seen at Goose Lake on May 7 and one on May 22 (D.B.,D.C.,P.P.).

Greater Yellow-legs. Two were at the southwest side of Little Wall on March 12, an early record (D.C.).

White-rumped Sandpiper. One was seen at Little Wall on May 12, and another was seen at the pond north of Goose Lake on May 30 (D.B.,D.C.,P.P.).

Baird's Sandpiper. Two individuals were observed at close range on the north side of Little Wall, August 25 (D.C.,H.J.).
May 12, and four were seen in the same locality on May 22 (D.B.,D.C.,P.P.).

Sanderling. An individual of this species was seen on mudflats at the north end of Little Wall, September 19 (D.C.,P.P.).

Northern Phalarope. Two were feeding in shallow water at the north end of Little Wall and were also seen in flight on August 25 (D.C.,H.J.).

Caspian Tern. Approximately 50 individuals were at Little Wall Lake, September 19, but they were not seen there the next day (D.C.,H.J.,P.P.).

American Pipit. Four were seen at Little Wall on October 1 and six on October 15. One was at Goose Lake on October 21 (D.C.,P.P.).

Dickcissel. One was seen along the railroad track on the south side of Goose Lake, October 21. The reddish-brown wing-patch and other field marks were noted. This is a very late record for this species (D.C.).—DENNIS L. CARTER, Webster City, Iowa.

Wilson's Snipe as a Lawn Bird.—April 7, 1956, was one of those backward spring days that are rather common in Iowa. It snowed almost all day with a fairly strong west wind. The snow did not accumulate on the ground except for a light covering, but much of this remained until the next afternoon. Late in the afternoon of the 7th, Mrs. J. S. Luther called me and said there was a flock of strange birds feeding on her lawn. I at once went to her home, a half block away, and found a flock of six Wilson's Snipe on the lawn at the rear. I went through the house and was able to watch the birds through the east kitchen windows at a distance of 10 to 15 feet. The birds were probing in the soft earth with their long bills, working back and forth in the short grass like a flock of chickens and almost as tame. There was no slough ground or other snipe habitat near by, and the birds seemed very much out of place. Perhaps the snowstorm brought them into town. They paid no attention to the large number of Robins running about near them or to the Bronzed Grackles that flew overhead. I watched them for 15 minutes and they were still there when I left, as no one went out the back door and they were not otherwise disturbed. I had never before seen the Wilson's Snipe feeding on a lawn in town or in an exposed situation of this sort.—FRED J. PIERCE, Winthrop, Iowa.

Bird Lists at Sweet Marsh.—I made three trips to Sweet Marsh in the spring of 1956. This is the state-owned area near Tripoli in Bremer County. On each trip I followed my usual plan of getting out at the paving and going along the west side of the northern lake. Below I am listing the new spring birds seen on succeeding dates, instead of naming all the birds seen on each trip. During three years' trips to Sweet Marsh I have identified 95 species on the area.

March 25: Snow Goose, 3; Blue Goose, 15; Mallard, 30; Gadwall, 2; Pintail, 3; Blue-winged Teal, 4; Redhead, 2; American Golden-eye, 1; American Merganser, 2; Red-breasted Merganser, 2; Ring-billed Gull, 8; Red-tailed Hawk, 4; Red-shouldered Hawk, 3; Western Meadowlark, Rusty Blackbird, Marsh Hawk, Killdeer, Crow, Blue Jay, Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Robin, Bronzed Grackle, Slate-colored Junco, Tree Sparrow.

April 4: Shoveller, 1; Lesser Yellow-legs, 3; Herring Gull, 2; Coot, 10; Flicker, Phoebe, Tree Swallow, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Migrant Shrike, Vesper Sparrow, Hermit Thrush, Sparrow Hawk, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Song Sparrow.

April 15: Loon, 1; Horned Grebe, 2; White Pelican, 1; Double-crested Cormorant, 10; American Egret, 1; Green-winged Teal, 30; Wood Duck, 3; Buffle-head, 2; Great Blue Heron, 2; Green Heron, 1; Baldpate, 8; Ring-necked Duck, 20; Lesser Scaup Duck, 150; Pectoral Sandpiper, 30; Ring-necked Pheasant, 2.—RUSSELL HAYS, Waterloo, Iowa.

Mockingbird in Des Moines.—A present-day rarity for Polk County appeared in the middle of January, 1956, when a Mockingbird took up residence in a chimney at 58th and Kingman Blvd., two blocks west of Waveland Golf Course. The chimney is covered with vines which have grown over the top and extend down into the opening, affording a warm roosting place. The bird remained until March 28, when it was apparently driven away by the returning Grackles. One of the foods upon which it subsisted was a large bunch of bittersweet fastened in a tree in the front yard of the house where it roosted.

In 1937 Mrs. Harold Peasley had six nests under observation, and in 1940 one nest. Another Mockingbird was seen in June, 1942, but there appear to be no records of the species in Polk County since these.—WOODWARD H. BROWN, Des Moines, Iowa.

Notes on Bird Migration, Fox Sparrow and Hermit Thrush in Particular.—Some authors' books on bird study tell their readers they should keep minute and daily records of all birds seen. From time to time newcomers in bird study ask me why they should keep a daily list on the two or three Chickadees or Downy Woodpeckers that come to their feeders. My reply is usually in the negative, for I don't list the common species on a daily basis.

Below are 18 species which I have never listed or stopped listing many years ago. The status of these birds is well known in this area and hardly need to be entered in the record book each day. The only exception would be the interesting behavior of an individual or a flock of birds of some species. I would say that watching a Blue Jay cover a piece of suet with dry leaves, or a Cardinal in the top of a catalpa tree prying into the split end of a seed pod and extracting a seed, would be worthy of record for either species for that day. Here are unusual acts of bird behavior not often witnessed. The list: Ring-necked Pheasant, Rock Dove, Flicker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, English Sparrow, Starling, Red-winged Blackbird, Grackle, Goldfinch, Cardinal, Sliate-colored Junco, and Tree Sparrow. All but six of these are permanent residents.

The spring and fall migration of birds is of course important and as complete records as possible should be kept. In this way we eventually learn a bit about the vagaries in migration of birds. Some of my findings after 30 years of record-keeping are sketched in this article.

I began to notice in my bird records over the years that a certain pattern was developing in the spring migration of the Fox Sparrow, some of the thrushes and other species. I was getting both early and late waves of birds. So if I see a Fox Sparrow or a Hermit Thrush in this area in mid-March or late March I feel quite safe in entering the record. But should I see a Fox Sparrow in mid-April or a Hermit Thrush the first week in May, I make a sharp identification and then enter the record in my day book. A bit of research in a good bird book will establish the fact that these birds don't all winter in the same latitude; it is obvious that the more northerly wintering birds would start north first.

The bulk of Fox Sparrows in the upper Missouri River valley flight apparently winter in Arkansas, but some Fox Sparrows also winter in mid-Texas and south. When I think my eyes are deceiving me and I see beautiful, rusty-colored Fox Sparrows in the last week of April, I realize that I am witnessing a late flight of Fox Sparrows. I formerly settled some of my field identification doubts by collecting an occasional specimen. But scientific collecting is now on the way out. Bird-banding offers fine opportunities for migration studies and important early or late spring records are established by trapping or netting.

The Hermit Thrush apparently has much the same winter range as the Fox Sparrow, in that in this area a few birds winter as far north as Missouri and Arkansas, while the bulk probably go as far south as southern Texas and mid-Florida. For some reason, I have never caught the late March flight of this thrush, but there are numerous records for Minnesota in March. It is possible that this early flight works up only the immediate Mississippi River valley. I apparently catch the second wave of birds about April 15, and then the late wave (which I would call the third wave) gets into the Sioux City region from May 1 to May 10.

Two other thrushes which seem to migrate in waves are the Olive-backed and the Gray-cheeked. Both of these species go entirely off the continent in their winter migration. According to authorities, the Gray-cheeked Thrush goes as far south as Peru, while the Olive-backed Thrush goes even farther south with many of them wintering in Argentina. The first wave of both these thrushes should be seen in your own backyard the last week of April. If you are fortunate and it has rained during the night in the last of May, you will probably again find many thrushes of these two species feeding in your garden and even giving a whisper or two of beautiful song. This will be the late flight of these fine birds. If you have been careful in your identification, you will have another fine record for your record book, one that you may not have again for many years. The migrations of birds seem dependent upon the whims of the wind and weather.—WM. YOUNGWORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in Hamilton County.—On the morning of June 10, 1956, Dale Birkenholz and I first heard and then finally saw a Gnatcatcher feeding in the upper branches of trees in a wooded area along the Boone River in Cass Township north of Webster City. The date would indicate its possible breeding in this area. I had never before seen this species in Hamilton County.—DENNIS L. CARTER, Webster City, Iowa.

A paper having a great deal of interest for Iowa bird students is "Ecological Aspects of the Sympatric Distribution of Meadowlarks in the North-central States," by Wesley E. Lanyon, published in "Ecology," Vol. 37, No. 1, January, 1956, pp. 98-108, with four maps and eight photographs. Mr. Lanyon is connected with the Dept. of Zoology, University of Arizona, at Tucson, and presumably reprints of the paper may be obtained from him. He will be remembered as the young man who gave a very interesting talk on the status of Eastern and Western Meadowlarks in this region, at our Des Moines convention in May, 1954. In the above paper the appendix giving sources of information has many references to Iowa records and Iowa observers. Iowa Bird Life provided many records.—F. J. P.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph W. Johnson, formerly of Dubuque and more recently of Ames, have purchased a home in Greenwood, Indiana, and have moved to that city. During the past several years, Mr. Johnson had been teaching at Iowa State College. With his retirement from teaching he decided to return to Indiana, where he was born and spent his early life. Mr. Johnson was President of Iowa Ornithologists' Union in 1949-1950. Our best wishes to the Johnsons in their new home.

Our larger Iowa bird clubs conducted their yearly "big day" bird counts in May, and several of them received considerable publicity in their local newspapers—another indication of the growing public interest in bird study and the activities of bird-watchers. The Cedar Rapids Bird Club made the

annual count on Sunday, May 13, and finished the day with a list of 123 species. According to the "Gazette", which printed a two-column story on the trip, this was the largest one-day bird list in the 27-year history of the club. A photograph of Miss Lillian Serbousek, our former Secretary-Treasurer, was included with the news story. At Des Moines, 29 members of the Audubon Society made the count on May 12, with a combined list of 133 species and 4,046 individual birds. There was an appropriate article in the "Register", which printed the entire bird list. The Sioux City Bird Club made the count on May 13, with 13 members participating; the total list was 127 species and 4,590 individuals. The entire list with numbers of each species seen, together with comment on the trip, furnished nearly a full column of copy for the newspaper.

At Davenport an estimated 150 people met on Credit Island at 4:30 a. m. May 5 and took part in the 32nd "May Dawn Bird Concert," which is the annual field trip sponsored by the Tri-City Bird Club. A total of 98 species were observed between 4:30 and 7:30 a. m. About 90 persons were served breakfast at the lagoon skating shelter at the close of the trip. Temperature was 52° F., the sky was overcast and there were intermittent thunder showers. A. Lang Baily, Curator of the Davenport Public Museum, writes: "The May Dawn Bird Concert is designed to bring as many amateurs and beginners into the field as possible; the real object is not to accumulate the biggest list possible but rather to acquaint casual observers intimately with a dozen or so species which may be seen in an hour or so in the field. The field parties were on foot and covered less than one-half mile in the two hours. In this respect we feel that this year's concert was highly successful since we estimated that there were 150 people present at 4:30 a. m. Our Club feels that they accomplished a lot more in this manner than by exerting their energies on an all-day field party for a large count."

RECENT BIRD BOOKS

TRAVELS AND TRADITIONS OF WATERFOWL, by H. Albert Hochbaum (University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1955; cloth, 8vo size, pp. i-xii+1-301, with drawings by the author; price, $5).

This is a contemporary masterpiece of wildfowl literature combining science and art. The author has utilized his talent and unique background as the Director of the Delta Waterfowl Research Station to initiate the layman and encourage his contemporaries while enlightening both. This book will be cherished by everyone who enjoys waterfowl, whether he be hunter, ornithologist, or neophyte. Hochbaum's style is invigorating, art inspiring, and above all, his message leads to a greater knowledge and appreciation of waterfowl. Academicians may argue minor interpretations, but only the pseudo-expert will misinterpret or draw inept conclusions. His writing is clear, precise, understandable and interesting. The work is a product of science and art blended together into a style which reflects "living" with waterfowl. The message is alive and invigorating, not a moldy treatise stifled by rigid scientific format, nor shrouded by political expediency.

This contemporary masterpiece should be read by all—the student, teacher, wildfowler, conservationist, ornithologist, and by each nondescript layman with more than a passing interest in waterfowl. For the enlightened professional this book is an absolute must!

Delta marsh becomes a reality as garralous voices of wildfowl rise above the phragmites and billow across borders of cat-tail and bulrush. The historical significance of Cadham's Pass accentuated by the appealing view of Dr. Cadham's cottage beneath, mark well this aerial trail as the narrator explains the purpose, theory and significance of all such trailways or passes.

Sketches of terrain and biota with accompanying thumb-nail maps tell a powerful story and familiarize the reader with the marsh, topography, and local geography.

Hochbaum carefully illustrates with words, "that the basic actions by which a duck meets its world are inborn rather than learned. Notwithstanding the strength of this inborn guidance, each bird's behavior is modified by learning; each individual must learn to meet its environment." Colorful examples illustrating this hypothesis adequately separate inborn, innate or instinctive behavior from learned response. He states: "in examining the world of waterfowl it must not be assumed that earth, sky, and all things between appear the same to man and bird." Thus, the structural and functional differences of the avian and human eye are discussed in detail, concluding in part that "the visual world of the waterfowl, then, while probably having the same colors as that of man, is much wider. It is viewed monocularly, and more of its detail is perceived sharply at a glance. Perception of movement is keener than in man, the power to resolve detail is greater, and the avian eye accommodates itself to changes in the position of objects more quickly. It is impossible, with our binocular vision and narrow visual field, to imagine how the world appears to a duck, but it is easy to understand how perception is highly efficient for spatial orientation."

The function of memory of waterfowl is treated in the light of scientific fact. A logical explanation of visual perception is proposed, indicating the retention of visual experience by which the past is ever related to the present. Analogies and examples show how visual experiences of the present create the past upon which the future depends.

The aerial environment and activities of feathered pilot and navigator are described in relationship to man's own recent experience in the air, providing a keener perception of avian flight and spacial orientation. The awareness of time and adherence to scheduled activities according to sun time are illustrated. Following an intense discussion of waterfowl activities and the vivid picture of "landmarks" in the sky, such as the cumulus clouds over the south shore of Lake Manitoba, the author cautions that "we must ever remember that just as time and space are not the same for the adult and baby duck, so they are not like entities for man and bird."

In beautiful narrative style the cycle of migration is explained. The flight trails south become realities as their complexities are described and illustrated both in words and pictures. Mass migration for the first time is correlated with continental weather patterns giving supporting flight dates and accompanying weather maps. No wildfowler can afford to miss this opportunity to learn to forecast conditions favorable for mass movements of waterfowl. Most important to those who would be waterfowl-wise is the statement: "probably all ducks at least once each autumn partake in a mass migration sweeping southward over traditional routes, young and old together. At other times, adults as well as juvenile wander in all directions from stopping places along the way of migration."

Spring or northward migration is likewise treated in detail, and finally waterfowl travel is classified under two broad headings and subdivided for clarity. The dimensions of travel are made crystal clear, not in terms of miles per hour or kilometers, but in the sense that a mile is not equal for man, mouse, or bird. The specific problem of Canvas-back migration from Delta to Lake Christina, Minnesota, is analized. From this profound analysis, and the supporting literature, avian travel and orientation in good and bad weather become realities not mysteries. Overseas migration is touched upon, indicating the possibilities of visual cues such as oceanic currents or cloud formations at sea. The influence of magnetic and radio fields upon birds is discussed from the standpoint of personal observation; and in the

light of current knowledge such influences appear to be no more useful to regional orientation than sound waves from a shotgun. Awareness of direction is discussed. Indications are that adult waterfowl usually travel as experienced birds over a familiar range, and they may hold a direct course for some distance without visual reference to a familiar landscape. In the fall migration of juveniles toward the wintering grounds, vast numbers travel with experienced adults, while others wander randomly, gaining temperate regions and wintering companions under the influence of the air mass in which they travel.

The "Traditions" section provides vivid pictures, examples, comparisons and analogies between men and wildfowl. After stating that "tradition is a proper biological term of special reference to behavior that is delivered by ancestor to progeny nongenetically," these traditions come alive as Hochbaum's pen points out so well that "when a bird learns from the behavior of its experienced companions, the objects, places or actions thus learned become traditional." New traditions are established and old traditions broken as waterfowl respond to the changes of environment.

Equally well the loss of the prairie potholes and other waterfowl areas is documented, described, and decried better than ever before. No one can read and appraise this loss without acknowledging the basic loss to men as well as to waterfowl.

Hochbaum's splendid bibliography is a worthwhile addition to any library. The index of authorities and subject index make cross reference convenient and pleasurable.

No review nor summary can adequately describe this book. You must read it to profit from the experience, knowledge, association and information which H. Albert Hochbaum has made available to you. It is his story, and I suggest you listen to him as you enjoy one of the finest books about waterfowl ever written.—JAMES G. SIEH.

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A LABORATORY AND FIELD MANUAL OF ORNITHOLOGY, by Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr. Third edition, revised (Burgess Publishing Co., Minneapolis, 1956; cloth, 4to size, pp. i-viii+1-379, with 180 drawings by W. J. Breckenridge; price, $5).

The many thousands of serious bird students who have used the former editions of Pettingill's "Manual" will welcome this new, enlarged, thoroughly-revised work. It has 50 new illustrations and 135 additional pages, while the handsome cloth binding will surely be found more durable and with a number of advantages over the spiral paper binding used in the last edition.

The "Manual" has had an interesting evolution, of which the author mentins four stages of development. In the initial stage Dr. Pettingill used a series of typewritten outlines for his ornithology students in classroom, laboratory and field. The second stage was reached in 1939, when the outlines were issued in mimeoprint. The worth of the series had by this time been definitely established, and in 1946 a second edition in photo offset was published. It was greatly expanded, with 18 sections, eight of which were devoted to text and outlines for study.

The gratifying reception given the 1946 edition indicated the prominent position the Manual had attained as an educational tool. It was adopted by more than 100 colleges and universities in 42 states. The fourth stage of the Manual—this third edition—was reached early in 1956 when the new book came off the press. It now has 20 sections and represents a fully rounded text developed through long use in the classroom and laboratory with revisions based on suggestions furnished by instructors and students all over the United States.

The 20 chapter titles indicate the completeness of the book: Topography, Feathers and Feather Tracts, Anatomy and Physiology, Systematics, External Structural Characters, Laboratory Identification, Plumages and Plumage Coloration, Distribution, Migration, Field Identification, Bird Ecology, Bird Communities, Bird Territory, Bird Song, Mating, Nests and Nest-building, Egg-laying and Incubation, Young and Their Development, Parental Care, Bird Populations. Each chapter is an independent unit which may be taken up in any order that may fit into the planning of individual courses. The text of each chapter is clear and concise, illustrated by appropriate drawings. For those who wish to pursue the topic further, there is a rather lengthy list of references to literature at the close of the chapter.

While the book is aimed at studies conducted on the college or university level, bird students outside of school will find it a stimulating and useful adjunct to any individual studies they may be conducting.

In addition to the 20 chapters mentioned, there are seven appendices covering 58 pages. One discusses ornithological field methods—blinds for observing, bird photography, capturing and banding birds, collecting and preserving specimens, recording colors, determining sex and age, weighing and measuring, attracting birds. Another gives directions for preparing papers on birds. Five of the appendices cover bibliographies. To the reviewer (who confesses to being an ardent book collector) these bibliographies constitute one of the best features of the book. The compilation is very complete and is separated into several classifications: Bibliographies Pertaining More or Less to Ornithology, Life History Studies (arranged by families), North American Works on Birds (arranged by states and provinces of Canada), Books for General Information and Recreational Reading, and Current Ornithological Journals.

The new Manual is truly an important ornithological publication of the year—one that we can recommend wholeheartedly as an excellent sourcebook for both amateur and professional student.—F. J. P.

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AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF NORTH DAKOTA ORNITHOLOGY, by T. C. Stephens (Published by William Youngworth as Occasional Papers No. 2, Nebr. Ornith. Union, 1956; paper binding, 4to size, pp. i-iv 1-22; price, $1).

The late Dr. T. C. Stephens of Sioux City was noted for his versatile talents. One of his most intent studies was that of the ornithological literature, and he did a great deal of work on bibliography. He published an extensive bibliography of South Dakota ornithology in 1945. More than 25 years of his life were devoted to a similar but much larger work on Iowa ornithology. This was left in manuscript form and has never been published. The present work was completed in 1948. The preface, written by Dr. Stephens, states that 267 title entries are included. These extend from 1858 to 1947, inclusive.

Making this bibliography available is a fine accomplishment, and we thank Mr. Youngworth, long an intimate friend of Dr. Stephens, for planning the publication. Copies may be obtained from Dr. Wm. F. Rapp, Jr., 430 Ivy Ave., Crete, Nebr.—F. J. P.

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The 8-page separate, "Iowa Distributional Check-list," from the December, 1954, issue of Iowa Bird Life, is available from our Librarian, Dr. J. Harold Ennis, Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, Iowa, price 25c a copy. This list gives the names of all birds known to occur in Iowa, and gives the distributional status of each in nine divisions of the state. It is a very useful compilation. Those who don't have it should secure copies while it is still available.